

Pet Noodles arrive by 'Packaging Express'

We can liken what we do for our clients as taking them on a journey – a journey whose final destination is packaged products on the shelf.

Some of our clients come on board from the beginning, just as they are starting to develop a new product idea. We take them from concept to finished, shelf-ready product. Others jump on and off, taking only the services they need to get them further down the line.

MJ Petfoods was one company that took Glowcraft's 'Packaging Express' all the way. The Pet Noodles project used every one of Glowcraft's services, and led us to develop some we didn't previously offer.

Pet Noodles is a fun, new, complementary pet food for dogs. It comprises dried noodles and freeze-dried, 100% natural protein which the pet owner mixes with hot water to create a doggie meal.

First we looked at how to package the product. The two components had to

be mixed in very specific and consistent quantities in a 70g sachet. After extensive trials, numerous changes of machine settings, several headaches and not a few sleepless nights we found a way to achieve it.

The machine is set up with two lanes, each delivering a weighed quantity of product into the sachet. The finished packs are checked regularly to ensure we are maintaining the required mix. Now we have perfected this technique, we could even mingle 3 products in one package.

Our client already had some ideas for the sachet print design, and taking these as a starting point, our design team developed them into an eye-catching and wacky design to fit the contents. (Read more about this on the back page.)

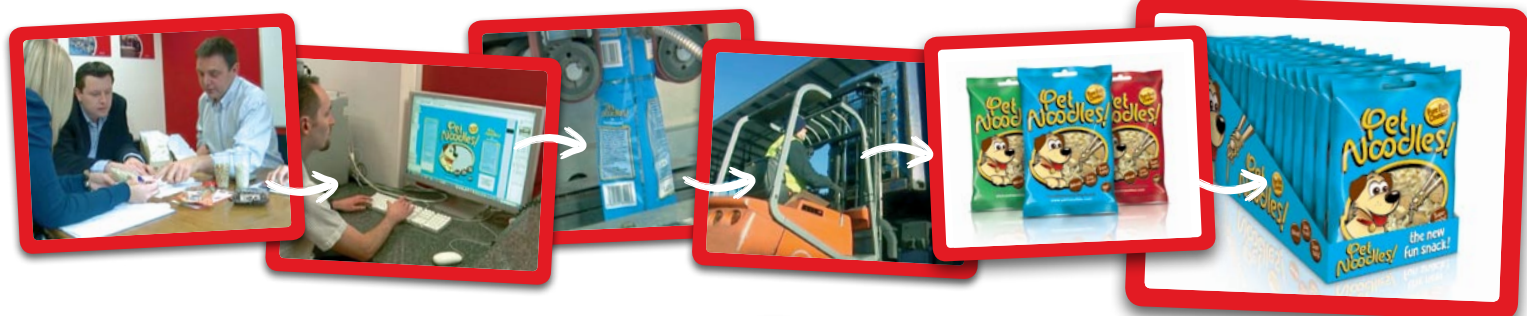
Next we looked at the shelf-ready packaging. Pet Noodles come in three flavours and it was a requirement to create a single, face-on display for the shelf. Each flavour is packed one sachet wide, 14 sachets to a box, with

Getting you from A-Z (or anywhere in between!)

three boxes (one of each flavour) sitting comfortably together on the shelf.

The outer display box had us scratching our heads to find a workable design. The light box crushed easily when it was taped shut, so to avoid damage and to make it easier for the retailer, we created an envelope tuck-in closure on the top as well as the bottom. The box's perforations allow a quick shelf-ready display. The sachets can be purchased singly, though the barcode on the box enables an efficient sale if someone wants 14 sachets.

MJ Petfoods has made the most of our services and expertise. The 'Packaging Express' isn't here to 'take you for a ride' but to get you comfortably from start to end. Jump aboard!



GET AHEAD OF THE GAME
It may seem early in the year to be thinking about Christmas, but now is a great time to get your festive products ready. You can get ahead of the game (and your competitors) by preparing your seasonal products now. If you need help with designs for your special packs, let us know. Once we've manufactured your Christmas products, don't worry if you haven't got the space to store them until you need them – we can take care of that too.

SEE FILM ON 'GROW YOUR OWN' POTS

Question: *how do you reduce packaging?* **Answer:** *make the packaging part of the product.*

That's all well and good, but achieving that is easier for some products than others. Take Grow Your Own pots, for example.

The product consists of a 500ml outer pot; an inner, holed pot; plant seeds; and growing medium. All the packaging is recyclable. The outer pot is dual purpose – it forms the packaging and doubles up as a watertight container for the inner pot.

The first challenge was to find the right growing medium. It had to support both seedlings and the maturing plants. It also had to be of a consistency that would flow through our machine without clogging – many composts and other growing media are too lumpy for this. Thirdly, it had to

be fibrous enough that in transit it didn't all run out of the holed pot. Finally, we had to be able to measure out very small quantities.

Once we had sourced a suitable growing medium, the next step was sealing the package. For this we invested in a pot-sealing machine. The machine we acquired can film-seal all kinds of containers and is also capable of sealing pots with a lid if required.

Now we have our film sealer, we can see it being used for all kinds of products, from fish bait to pet food and plant food.

Visit our website, www.glowcroft.co.uk to

see a different kind of film, a short video of our pot-sealer in action. Could one of your products be next up?



LILY'S KITCHEN PROVES PACKAGING NEEDN'T BE SQUARE...

Supplier of organic pet treats, Lily's Kitchen has now released a bedtime biscuit for dogs. The all-natural biscuits contain ingredients that calm your pet and get it ready to sleep.

As we do, Norfolk-based Lily's Kitchen likes to work with local companies where possible, so the product packaging is printed in Norwich and filled by us in Suffolk. To protect the organic status of the product we must ensure that the packing line is absolutely clean before we start.

Such an unusual product demands packaging different from the commonplace, so it has a distinctive, pointy top that surprisingly, takes no more material than a similar sized 'square' box.



TUBES – OUR LATEST PET PROJECT

For petfood manufacturer, Pet Project we are using one of our machines in a new way. The manufacturer of Thrive (premium, 100% natural pet treats) wanted to distinguish their product from other pet treats, and so chose cardboard tube packaging.

Pet Project supplies the large and small tubes and we use the Quad to fill them. This machine efficiently fills four tubes at a time with a pre-weighed quantity of product, caps each tube and date stamps the top.

The tubes are pre-printed when we receive them, but the Quad could handle 'naked' tubes, automatically applying labels and barcodes on the line.



...AND MR GOODLAD IS UNCONVENTIONAL!



With flow-wrapped products the convention is to print the film along the roll, but why not print it across for a different look? That's just what petfood manufacturer Petbrokers did with its Mr Goodlad doggie treats.

The sachets are formed, filled and sealed in just the same way as any other sachet and use no more material. Packaging a product this way is no more difficult and could make your product stand out from the rest.

Do you want to do something unconventional with your packaging? Perhaps our flexible, sideways approach can help you do so!

Meet Steve Bird, Sales Manager

Steve joined the Glowcroft team as our sales manager in January 2011 and arrived with a bit of a bang – reversing his brand new car into an empty trailer, parked in the Glowcroft car park on his very first day!

Since then Steve has made an impact in other ways too. He has introduced new processes to make us more efficient and so more helpful to customers, and has already worked with the team to make changes to the way we prepare quotations.

The 30 plus years' of experience he has in selling garden chemicals and sundries means he has quite an affinity with many of our customers. During his career Steve has worked in all kinds of sales roles, from rep to sales director, and he is using his knowledge to find new markets and

new customers for Glowcroft.

He will tell you that he is finding the move from product-based companies to a service company stimulating and enjoying being in a role that once again allows him to be creative. He says he likes order and loves design, and at Glowcroft he has found an environment where he can combine both and work with a great bunch of people. He finds it particularly satisfying to look at new ideas and explore concepts with customers. It's a good job he likes being busy!

Steve's role involves a lot of travel, which sometimes allows him to appreciate the architecture of the buildings in places he visits. Otherwise you may find him watching motorsport, cooking, or going for some retail therapy with his wife.



MOVING STORAGE DOUBLES OUR WORKSPACE

For five years we have struggled to contain our business within the space we have, and with no more space available, we have had to rethink the way we manage storage. We now work with external warehousing and distribution partners. Moving the majority of our storage elsewhere has allowed us to both double the production area and maintain our service to clients.

Adopting this new regime meant we had to shift 500 pallets over one weekend. By the end it wasn't just the fork-lifts whose batteries were running low, but we did it!

We have retained some storage at Glowcroft, but because this is limited, we are now operating a 'three-week' policy. We

will store anything you supply to us and your finished product on site for no more than three weeks – the week before your job, the week of your production run, and the week following.

Going forward we will have to plan our production schedules more accurately. If you let us know your production forecasts, particularly if you have a regular run, it will help us to ensure you get your products when you want them.

We have also introduced a new timed booking system for deliveries and collections. If you want to move goods into or out of our premises, call us and tell us which date and we will allocate you

a timed slot. This helps all our customers by reducing waiting times for drivers and minimising congestion in the goods in and collection areas.



These changes will help us become more efficient and we would like to thank those customers who have already fully embraced our new processes.



...THANK YOU!

This is a year of anniversaries for Glowcroft, and as I reflect on those it makes me realise just how much Glowcroft has grown.

Ten years ago we moved into premises in Suffolk from our previous base in Gloucester. At the time, we needed more room, and space to expand as the number of customers was growing. We more than doubled our workspace when we installed ourselves into one, purpose-built facility. When we first arrived it seemed cavernous!

Three years later we had outgrown our 8,500 sq ft and so acquired further units to bring our total area to 24,000 sq ft. Guess what? That also became too small, so last year we

extended again to our current 32,000 sq ft and now even that is too small.

April this year is also Glowcroft's 21st birthday. The fact that we can celebrate being in business this long and have grown during some difficult economic times is down to you. Without your loyalty I would not be here reflecting on these anniversaries.

So, to every one of you who has been and will be one of our customers, I say a big 'thank you'.

Steve Tarrant, managing director
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BRAND DESIGN PACKAGING DESIGN ADVERTISING STATIONERY WEBSITE DESIGN VEHICLE GRAPHICS ...AND MORE!



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE!

Take a look at Glowcroft's website www.glowcroft.co.uk. It has changed, but not out of all recognition.



NEW WEBSITE FOR DRAGONFLI'S GARDEN HELPERS

Our recent commission to create the Dragonfli Ltd website was one project that required quite a bit of thought. The client has a unique portfolio of products and services and this diversity is what provided the challenge.

The design needed to convey the right messages about the company's ethos and products, look consistent throughout, make it easy for site visitors to find the information they wanted, and accommodate additional information in the future. Quite a tall order!

The company currently has four main product areas – bumblebees (portable live hives that you can order!), pest control, plant care and a consultancy and advice service. As well as promoting the company's

products and services, Dragonfli wanted to make the site into a resource by including a large information base.

One click into the website and the information is clearly laid out in the centre, full of valuable, intriguing information and imagery. A stylised image border to the left and right frames each page and is relevant to the specific area that the user is viewing.

During the project our design team became so involved in the variety (which even involved a photoshoot for live bumblebees!) they were fascinated, particularly by beneficial insects that prey on pests. Visit www.dragonfli.co.uk and you can learn about them too. And while you're there, be sure to notice the design.

The whole site has been redesigned, and it is probably the new videos that will catch your eye first. Most of the pages have a short clip taking you through each of the different packaging services, with the home page video tying it all together. The video was professionally shot and involved almost everyone who works here over a couple of days. These visuals are a great way of showing you what we do, especially for those of you who cannot get to visit us in person.

A website should be reviewed from time to time to ensure it stays fresh, keeps up with current trends and continues to promote your brand. It is this that prompted us to look at ours! We wanted the site to seem familiar to previous visitors, so we retained the best bits from the previous design and subtly incorporated a more contemporary look.

Is your website review overdue? Give us a call and we will gladly discuss your ideas for how to refresh your website.

Dougal illustrates the Pet Noodles brand

Caricatures, cartoons and illustrations can be a great way to get your brand noticed, especially if you have a fun product or one targeted at kids. We have used caricatures of Glowcroft staff in our own promotional materials, such as calendars and the website.

Pet Noodles manufacturer, MJ Petfoods had an idea to identify their brand through a cartoon dog. Paul in our design team has drawn cartoons and caricatures as a hobby since he was young and is a skilled illustrator. He enjoys working on client

projects where he can use this skill and wishes there were more of them. Paul calls it 'the lighthearted side of Glowcroft's service' because it captures our clients' playful side.

Dougal was born from MJ Petfoods' initial concept. You'll find him on packs of Pet Noodles, and who knows where he may turn up in future – on Christmas cards, T-shirts, promotional packs perhaps?

If you have an idea to use illustrations in any of your brand promotions, talk to Paul.



Bring a little character to your brand!

For design services contact Paul Abbott at paul.a@glowcroft.co.uk

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